

from the NATO-led peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and Kosovo. His future National Security Advisor Dr. Rice echoed this misguided notion in a newspaper interview. The following spring, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, flying in the face of all objective evidence, declared that the problem of Bosnia had been settled three or four years earlier. Even in this body resolutions for withdrawal of U.S. forces were periodically submitted, but, I am happy to say, rejected.

Now we are waging war, attempting to quell resistance movements in Afghanistan and Iraq. We all know that our armed forces are stretched perilously thin, and obviously some troop adjustments have had to be made. U.S. forces in Bosnia have been reduced to little more than one thousand, or about 5 percent of their initial strength. Later this year NATO will turn over command of SFOR to the European Union, although some American troops will remain at our base in Tuzla, at the request of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Let me repeat that for my colleagues: the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the representatives of all three major groups—the Bosnian Muslims, Serbs, and Croats—concurring, requested that American troops stay on in Bosnia after the EU takes command of the peacekeeping force. The fact is that the United States has stature unequalled in that part of the world perhaps even higher in Kosovo than in Bosnia.

As in SFOR, we have drastically reduced our troop strength in KFOR. Given the events of the past few weeks, we dare not reduce it further. KFOR troops played a key role in quelling the Kosovo violence. I am told that of the various national contingents, American KFOR troops especially distinguished themselves.

Further proof of the Bush administration's downgrading the importance of the region was its abolishing the position of Special Coordinator for the Balkans. This position should be reinstated and filled by a senior career diplomat with extensive experience in Balkan affairs.

This new Special Coordinator should immediately engage the political leadership in Pristina and Belgrade in serious dialogue. I do not want to prejudge what the final international legal status of Kosovo will be, although I cannot imagine that Kosovo will ever revert to direct control from Belgrade. Whatever the end result, direct negotiations between Pristina and Belgrade must be an integral part of the process. No other path would stand the test of time.

The United States was Serbia's ally in two world wars in the first half of the twentieth century. The United States is revered by Kosovar Albanians as their savior from the recent tyranny of Slobodan Milosevic. We have earned a credibility that no other country, or group of countries, possesses.

This administration should utilize this unique position, in coordination with other members of the contact group, to jumpstart the process of creating a safe, prosperous, democratic, multi-ethnic Kosovo.

#### GREY BERETS RISKED ALL IN IRAQ WAR

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, we have all heard the expression that "knowledge is power." At no time is this more true than when we are at war. Our military uses satellites, reconnaissance aircraft, remote sensing devices, and long-range patrols to learn where the enemy is, what he is doing, and how we can kill him.

But there is another type of knowledge which is just as essential if we are to be successful in combat. The side which knows and understands the weather the best has a large advantage.

Now, I know some may reply that we do not need to be concerned about the weather. We have smart bombs, stealth fighters and guided missiles. We have sensing devices which let us see in the darkness. But despite this high technology, we still have to give Mother Nature her due. Rain, clouds and low visibility can still ground aircraft or hamper operations. High temperatures affect men and equipment. Dust storms can rapidly render sophisticated machines and electronics unusable.

Our troops faced many weather extremes as we prepared for the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom a year ago. Extreme heat, thunderstorms, and dust storms all threatened operations. To learn more about Iraq's weather and to gather the data necessary to predict, if possible, weather patterns in that country, a group of brave meteorologists dropped behind enemy lines. They fed their information to the Air Force's 28th Operational Weather Squadron, known as "The Hub."

As detailed in a special being carried by the Weather Channel, the United States Air Force dropped its Special Operations Forces Weathermen, known as the "Grey Berets," behind enemy lines weeks before the beginning of armed conflict. The Grey Berets took exceptional risks to gather the data necessary for our Army, Navy and Air Force to conduct operations. For example, 5 days before the land invasion started, Grey Beret Sgt Charles Rushing waded ashore to gather information on fog, surf, and currents to enable a helicopter assault team to successfully seize key Iraqi refineries on the Al-Faw peninsula before Iraqi troops blew them up.

After the war began, the Hub reported on the biggest dust storm to hit the region in 30 years. The storm, covering over 300 miles, shredded tents and clogged engines and lungs. To the north, the storm created other problems, by dumping snow and sleet on Bashur Airport, the target of the most ambitious combat paratroop assault since World War II. The 173d Airborne

brigade was flying toward a mountainous drop zone while Cpt John Roberts, chief Grey Beret weather forecaster, had to make a call on whether the weather would lift long enough for 1,000 paratroopers to safely make their jump.

The actions and decisions of these two men are just two examples where our Grey Berets helped ensure the success of our troops. There are many, many more.

Mr. President, I commend the Grey Berets for their heroism and professionalism and their contributions to our armed services. I also thank the Weather Channel for bringing their achievements to wider public notice.

#### S. 275, THE PROFESSIONAL BOXING AMENDMENTS ACT

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate has agreed by unanimous consent to pass S. 275, the Professional Boxing Amendments Act of 2004 (Act). I would like to thank the bill's cosponsors, Senators STEVENS, DORGAN, and REID for their commitment to professional boxing and the warriors who sustain the sport.

This amendment is designed to strengthen existing Federal boxing laws by making uniform certain health and safety standards, establishing a centralized medical registry to be used by local commissions to protect boxers, reducing arbitrary practices of sanctioning organizations, and providing uniformity in ranking criteria and contractual guidelines. It also would establish a Federal entity, the United States Boxing Commission—USBC—to promulgate minimum uniform standards for professional boxing and enforce Federal boxing laws.

Over the past 7 years, the Commerce Committee has taken action to address the problems that plague the sport of professional boxing. The committee has already developed two Federal boxing laws that have been enacted, the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996, and the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act of 2000. These laws established minimum uniform standards to improve the health and safety of boxers, and to better protect them from the often coercive, exploitative, and unethical business practices of promoters, managers, and sanctioning organizations. While these laws have had a positive impact on professional boxing, the sport remains beset by a variety of problems, some beyond the scope of local regulation.

Promoters continue to steal fighters from each other, sanctioning organizations make unmerited ratings changes without offering adequate explanations, promoters refuse to pay fighters who have put their lives on the line, local boxing commissions fail to ensure the protection of boxers' health and safety, boxers are contractually and financially exploited, and the list continues. Most recently, we have learned of a federal law enforcement